

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT RECORD KOBUK-SEWARD PENINSULA RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Meeting Location: Nome, Alaska, St. Joseph Church

Meeting Date: March 24, 2004

Purpose: Identify public issues and concerns with BLM-managed lands in the Planning Area.

Number of public in attendance: 14

BLM personnel in attendance: Bob Schneider, Jeanie Cole, Tom Dilts, Randy Meyers, and Tom Sparks

Meeting format: Through a PowerPoint presentation, attendees were introduced to what an RMP does and why BLM is doing a new one. They were also given examples of decisions that might come out of an RMP. They had the opportunity to review maps of land status, State-identified RS2477 routes, reindeer grazing allotments, anadromous streams, Seward 1008 PLO locations (mineral entry), guide use areas, and game management units in the Planning Area. Participants were asked to express their concerns and issues with BLM-managed public lands. These are documented below. An Interested Party letter explaining the types of decisions made in the RMP and giving an overview of the initial steps in planning was distributed. In addition, a small-scale map of the planning area, a copy of the planning website home page, and copy of the PowerPoint presentation were available for attendees to take. A scoping comment sheet that can either be filled out at the meeting or returned to BLM at a later date was also made available to attendees.

Issues/Questions/Concerns:

Flipchart notes:

1. BLM should consider transportation corridors to areas open to mining and coordination with the NW Transportation Plan. Also consider RS2477 claims by the State. Coordinate with adjacent plans such as the Central Yukon RMP.
2. BLM needs to collaborate/cooperate in transportation planning in adjacent areas: i.e., the planning area boundary cuts off in the middle of the Nulato Hills while the routes proposed in the NW transportation plan go into adjacent areas such as the Anchorage FO and Central Yukon Mgmt. area.
3. Reindeer grazing leases: Leases should be for at least 10 years (20-30 years if possible) to allow herders more opportunity to develop a stable business and get loans. BLM should allow for reindeer grazing in other areas, not just the Seward Peninsula. The reindeer industry wants/needs to expand. There are highs and lows

with reindeer and caribou herds and herders need the flexibility to deal with this cyclical nature of the industry.

4. Guides and Outfitters: Competition with local subsistence users is an issue. If we set limits of acceptable use and allocate the number of guide/outfitter permits, there should be preference given to local resident guides over non-residents. If changes to guiding permits/regulations are proposed, the guides would appreciate a phone call as it affects their livelihood.
5. BLM lands are important for public, recreational, and commercial uses. These uses need to be considered, and BLM should keep the lands open for these types of use. Will BLM restrict helicopter access? No. The FAA controls this. Nome would like to see the BLM lands remain open to tours. They do not want too many restrictions. The NPS has too many restrictions on their land.
6. Bring DGGs data into the plan regarding oil & gas and coal bed methane. BLM land north of Council and Solomon should remain open to mineral entry. Oil, gas and methane: are there any studies being done by the State or BLM? Similar to what BLM is doing with Fort Yukon to drill for shallow gas.
7. Issue: Who gets priority on the Salmon Lake selections? Individual use (Native allotment applicants) predates other use of the area and should have priority.
8. The accelerated land conveyance program should be addressed in the plan.
9. BLM should consider more facilities such as trails, campgrounds and shelter cabins. Teller road was one area mentioned for a possible campground. BLM could cooperate with local groups to maintain facilities.
10. Access for mining needs to be assured. Is access to BLM lands for mining guaranteed? Should identify needed access routes to areas open to mining and make sure they are covered in the plan. Current OHV limitation of 2,000 pounds does not provide for movement of mining equipment
11. There are existing claims/mineral deposits in the Planning Area. BLM needs to recognize prior existing rights.
12. Wild and Scenic Rivers: Will BLM control catch and release of fish or does the State have management? BLM would not assert management of fisheries on non-navigable waters unless there was a conflict with subsistence.
13. Subsistence regulations: There should be state and federal cooperation to align the regulations on state and federal land, i.e., cooperative state/federal hunts so that hunters don't have to worry about land status. The animals don't recognize land status.
14. Visual resources: BLM should be careful about limitations on development for VRM. NPS and FWS lands are already tied up and protected. BLM and State lands need to remain open for development and access.
15. Visual resources are very important especially in the Nome area. It is very beautiful and visitors are amazed. BLM needs to preserve the scenic quality of the land for tourism.
16. BLM should consider authorizing buffalo as an alternative form of livestock.
17. Can BLM permit recreational cabins? There seems to be general support for recreational use cabins.
18. High mineral values in the Kigluaik Mountains: graphite

Additional comments received the day after the meeting:

1. Nome developed a comprehensive plan last year. It focuses on bird watching and snowmachine use as potential tourist draws to the area. Bird watching is a major tourist draw to Nome and is expected to double in the next 20 years.
2. BLM should develop maps or brochures that suggest routes of travel and likely camping spots that avoid private property. Many people would enjoy hiking or snowmachining in the area but are intimidated because of the lack of information, trails, etc.
3. BLM should consider the upper Kuzitrin drainage as an access corridor to Bering Land Bridge NP. This would provide access from a public road across BLM into the NP and a coordinated trail system with shelter cabins could be developed between the NPS and BLM lands.